

Living Above

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:1-4

What does it mean to “live above”?

This Scripture first says that we are to set our **hearts** on things above. The heart is the center of physical life, the seat of the emotions and the source of spiritual life. The center, the innermost part of man—the seat of the emotions and feelings, instincts, and passions; the center of man’s will, the seat of his power of decision; this is what was believed about the heart in New Testament times, and also how we express what the “heart” is today.

The passage next says that we must set our **minds** on things above. Paul’s meaning when he talks about the mind is the capacity to think, to judge; he is referring not only to the process of thinking in itself, but also the CONTENT of what is thought.

In “The Dictionary of New Testament Theology”, Colin Brown says, “The way one thinks is intimately related to the way one lives—either in Christ or in the flesh”.

“Living Above” means that your life is hidden with Christ, in God. Emotionally, we live above when we set our hearts on things above. Mentally and spiritually, we live above when we set our minds on things above. Physically, we remain in the circumstances of daily life on earth; and many times our circumstances are stormy. God doesn’t often (although He CAN) pluck us up out of our circumstances and set us down on a mountaintop. It’s a spiritual paradox that often it’s in the very depths of the storm that God teaches us how to live above, emotionally and spiritually. “Living above” is not denial. It is not plastering a fake smile on your face and saying everything’s fine when it’s not. “Living above” does not mean we don’t feel pain, anguish, or grief. Picture a storm at sea. Your boat has capsized, and you are desperately trying to stay afloat amidst the towering waves and pounding rain. Suddenly a life preserver appears next to you, with a rope attached to it. You have a rescuer! Slipping the preserver on, you discover that you can keep your head above water, and that now your mind and heart are totally fixed above you, on the great ship to which the rope is attached. You are still in the storm; but you are filled with joy because you are no longer lost, and you are no longer alone. In the same way, God teaches us a new way of fellowshiping with him, depending on Him, in the midst of the storm.